

Cascade Unimak Rockfish Cooperative
Gulf of Alaska Rockfish Pilot Program
Annual Report for 2011

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INTRODUCTION

The Cascade Unimak Rockfish Cooperative (Cooperative) was one of five catcher/processor cooperatives that formed in 2011 under the Central Gulf of Alaska Rockfish Pilot Program (RPP). The Cooperative has two member vessels/licenses, the F/T Seafisher (LLG2014) and the F/T Unimak (LLG3957). This was the first year these licenses participated in the RPP as part of a cooperative. In previous years they fished as part of the limited access fishery or opted out of the program. Implementation of Gulf of Alaska FMP Amendment 85, which removed the July BSAI stand-down period for RPP catcher/processor participants, helped facilitate formation of the Cooperative.

COOPERATIVE QUOTA HARVEST & RETENTION

The Cooperative was allocated quota for primary species (Pacific Ocean perch, northern rockfish and pelagic shelf rockfish), secondary species (rougheye rockfish, sablefish, shortraker rockfish and thornyhead rockfish), and halibut prohibited species quota in the central gulf. The Cooperative completed quota transfers for four of its allocated species and the F/T Unimak was used to harvest all cooperative quota in the central gulf (Table 1). The Alaska Region catch accounting database and observer data were the sources for this information.

Species	Initial CQ Allocation	Transfers In	Transfers Out	Total CQ	Catch	% of CQ Harvested
Pacific Ocean Perch	566.660	-	-	566.660	558.172	99%
Northern rockfish	120.753	-	19.0	101.753	98.037	96%
Pelagic Shelf Rockfish	128.565	-	91.7	36.865	21.405	58%
Rougheye rockfish	59.947	-	-	59.947	12.341	21%
Sablefish	23.911	-	5.0	18.911	9.175	49%
Shortraker rockfish	11.45	18.803	-	30.253	21.974	73%
Thornyhead	17.143	-	-	17.143	3.168	18%
Halibut	12.717	-	-	12.717	1.978	16%

Table 1. CGOA CQ allocations, transfers, and harvest in Area 630 by species. Harvested by F/T Unimak.

For the RPP, fishing occurred in Areas 620 and 630 of the central gulf. Actual retained (product weight) and discarded catch of CQ as reported in Sea-Landings is shown in Table 2. The RPP regulations stipulate that no primary or secondary species be discarded while a vessel is fishing under a CQ permit and all primary and secondary species were retained by the Cooperative.

Species	620 Retained	620 Discarded	630 Retained	630 Discarded
Pacific Ocean Perch	270.081	0	38.451	0
Northern rockfish	53.928	0	0	0
Pelagic Shelf Rockfish	12.957	0	0.105	0
Rougeye rockfish	0.000	0	8.064	0
Sablefish	1.554	0	5.187	0
Shortraker rockfish	0.105	0	22.596	0
Thornyhead	1.176	0	1.743	0

Table 2. F/T Unimak actual retained product weight and discarded catch from the central gulf reporting areas.

COOPERATIVE SIDEBOARD HARVEST & RETENTION

In addition to the Cooperative's allocations in the central gulf, it had sideboard limits for a variety of rockfish species in the western gulf and West Yakutat and for deep-water and shallow-water halibut throughout the gulf (Table 3). The F/T Unimak was used to harvest sideboards in West Yakutat (Area 640) and the F/T Seafisher harvested sideboards in the western gulf (Area 610). No sideboard limits were exceeded by the Cooperative.

Species	Sideboard Limit	Catch	% of Sideboard Harvested	Retained	Discarded
Pacific Ocean Perch (WG - 610)	275.789	168.540	61%	91.267	0.516
Northern rockfish (WG - 610)	30.227	0.478	2%	0.040	0
Pelagic Shelf Rockfish (WG - 610)	12.071	1.068	9%	0.481	0
Pacific Ocean Perch (WY - 640)	1,061.871	1,040.812	98%	565.845	0
Pelagic Shelf Rockfish (WY - 640)	246.921	24.266	10%	15.057	0
GOA Deep-water Halibut	10.222	3.146	31%	n/a	n/a
GOA Shallow-water Halibut	0.249	0	0%	n/a	n/a

Table 3. Cooperative's western gulf and West Yakutat sideboard limit, catch, production, and discards.

HARVEST & AGREEMENT MONITORING

The Cooperative used custom software (E-Harvest and CatchPoint) to monitor each vessels catch of quota and sideboard species. Each haul was sampled by onboard fishery observers and their data imported into custom software that extrapolated the sample data to the entire haul. In this manner, each vessel was able to monitor their catch on a haul-by-haul basis to ensure no limits were exceeded. Daily reports were also sent to the Cooperative, who also monitored catch and progress towards harvest limits. No violations of the Cooperative's membership agreement occurred and the Cooperative did not take any actions against any member.

SUMMARY

The RPP has been a successful program and participants have benefited from the rationalized rockfish fisheries in the central gulf. As the RPP sunsets and we move to a new management regime under the revised rockfish program we hope that participants continue to receive the same benefits and operating flexibility that has been afforded under the pilot program and that rationalization of the other groundfish fisheries in the gulf will someday be accomplished.